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U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, December 23, 1932.

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Subject: "Christmas Recipes." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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Merry Christmas, Everybody. Some say it with roses. I'm going to say it with recipes. Just as I promised you yesterday, my Christmas greetings to you are three of the very best Christmas recipes I know. I'm going to give you directions for some simple inexpensive Christmas candies suitable for an economy year--candy that the children can help make and will enjoy twice as much for that reason. They can help you make up a batch today or tomorrow all ready for the big festivities on the twenty-fifth.

Some of these homemade confections are good for double duty. They make jolly decorations for the Christmas tree and after dinner the youngsters can pick and eat these different "fruits" of the Yuletide tree. My Next-Door Neighbor says her children enjoy the homemade decorations they make more than any others. These youngsters make popcorn balls the day before Christmas and hang these by threads to the smaller branches. They also wind the tree with strings of popcorn and cranberries and hang here and there a polished red apple or a bright orange. Christmas is the time to use the tin foil the children have been saving all year. My young neighbors smooth it out and use it to wrap up nuts, candies or homemade cookies which they fasten to the tree with bits of red ribbon or string. The more tinfoil used, the more the tree will sparkle in any light. Cookies cut in fancy shapes, perhaps in shapes of animals, covered with colored frosting and attached to the tree will please the smallest members of the family.

Now if you're ready with your pencil, I'll give you the best recipe I know for popcorn balls. You can make these balls with the usual taffy mixture. Or you can make them with maple or chocolate flavor. For plain popcorn balls you'll need seven ingredients!

1 and 1/2 cup of sugar	1 teaspoon of vanilla
1 cup of water	2 quarts of freshly popped corn, and
2 tablespoons of vinegar	2 cups of nut kernels, if desired.
1/2 teaspoon of salt	

I'll repeat that list of ingredients.(Repeat)

Boil the sugar, water, vinegar and salt until the sirup hardens when dipped in cold water, or until the candy thermometer registers 250 degrees F. Add the vanilla, pour while hot over the popcorn and nuts, and mix well. When cool enough to handle, grease the hands and form the mixture into balls. When cold, wrap the balls in waxed paper.

To make maple balls use part maple sugar and part white sugar in the recipe

To make chocolate balls, simply add two squares of unsweetened chocolate to the syrup just before taking from the stove.

Another simple candy that the children will enjoy making is nut brittle. Use the nuts you picked up in the fall whether they're hickory, walnuts, pecans or any other variety. Or use shelled peanuts.

Here are the ingredients for nut brittle.

2 cups of granulated sugar	1 teaspoon of vanilla, and
1/4 teaspoon of salt	2 cups of nuts.
1/4 teaspoon of soda	

I'll go over that list of five once more. (Repeat.)

First, heat the sugar gradually in a clean, smooth skillet. Stir constantly with the bowl of a spoon until a golden syrup forms. Remove from the fire and stir in quickly the salt, soda, and vanilla. Pour the syrup over a layer of nuts in a greased pan. When cold, crack into small pieces.

One of the most attractive fruit confections and one that will please the children especially is made with whole apples. Caramel apples on a stick have much of the charm of lollipops. These apples need to be eaten very soon after they're fixed. They won't keep satisfactorily in damp weather, because the candy coating becomes sticky and is likely to soften and drip off the apples. Here's the recipe:

Firm, tart apples	2 tablespoons vinegar
Wooden skewers	1/4 cup water
2 cups brown sugar	1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup corn sirup	1 teaspoon vanilla
2 tablespoons butter	I'll repeat that list of nine (Repeat)

Select medium-sized, firm, tart apples with red skins, free from blemishes. Jonathans or Winesaps are a good variety of apples to use. Wash and wipe the apples dry and insert a skewer in the stem end. Heat the sugar, corn sirup, butter, vinegar, water, and salt in a small deep pan and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Continue cooking without stirring until the sirup reaches a temperature of 253°F., or 123°C., or until it forms a hard firm ball when dropped into cold water. Remove the sirup from the fire, add the vanilla, stir until well blended and dip the apples into it, one at a time. Lift the apple by the skewer and plunge it quickly into the hot sirup until it is completely coated. Then twirl it in the cool air until the sirup has begun to harden and form a smooth even glaze. Slip the skewers into a rack so that the apples do not touch anything until the caramel coating has set.

Once more, Aunt Sammy wishes you a Merry Christmas.

